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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UNSC](#) [IS](#) [LE](#)
SUBJECT: UNSC: COUNCIL CALLS FOR UNIFIL RENEWAL; MAJORITY
VOICE CONCERN ABOUT JULY EVENTS

REF: A. STATE 86628
[1](#)B. USUN NEW YORK 768
[1](#)C. USUN NEW YORK 721

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: On August 20, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Mulet briefed the Security Council in consultations on UNIFIL. He highlighted the Hizballah arms cache explosion at Khirbet Selim, as he and other DPKO officials have to the Council on previous occasions (refs B and C). He reiterated the Secretary-General's recommendation that the Council extend UNIFIL's mandate for another 12 months. Council members unanimously agreed with the recommendation to extend the mandate. The majority of Council members again voiced concern about the July events in Khirbet Selim and the impingement on UNIFIL's freedom of movement during the investigation. Several members called for determined action by the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) to ensure that there are no arms, armed elements, or weapons smuggled into the area south of the Litani River. The Libyan DPR was alone in trying to excuse the Khirbet Selim incident, justifying the presence of arms because of daily Israeli air violations and the "Israeli network of spies" and characterizing Hizballah presence in the area as "natural" given Hizballah's close cooperation with the LAF. Almost all Council members touched on Israel's continued overflights and need to withdraw from northern Ghajar. Council members welcomed the Secretariat's planned assessment of UNIFIL and called for the Council to be briefed on the results. End summary.

DPKO again highlights Hizballah arms
cache; calls for UNIFIL renewal

[1](#)2. (SBU) Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet briefed the Council in consultations on August 20 on UNIFIL. He reiterated the Secretary-General's recommendation from his August 6, 2009 letter to the Council that UNIFIL's mandate should be extended for another 12 months. (Note: USUN e-mailed the Secretary-General's letter to IO/PSC and IO/UNP. End note.) Mulet summarized UNIFIL's initial findings about the July 14 arms cache explosion at Khirbet Selim, which were consistent with Under Secretary-General LeRoy's briefing to the Council on July 23 (ref C) and Mulet's own briefing to the Council and Troop Contributors (TCCs) on August 13 (ref B). He said that the weapons dated from the 1970s to 1990s and were in good working order. He again said there was evidence that the arms depot was actively maintained and under the control of Hizballah. Mulet noted that the Khirbet Selim area has since "returned to normal" and that tensions had declined in the Kfar Shouba area. He announced that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) had dismantled on August 17 the watchtower and concrete block base which had provoked the protest and Blue Line violation by Lebanese civilians and parliamentarians on July 17. (Note: DPKO staffer told PolOff August 19 that the Israeli action does not quite represent a return to the status quo ante since a tank position berm remains in place,

but this matter is outside UNIFIL's area of operations since it is on the south side of the Blue Line. End note.)

UNIFIL - troop configuration
and MTF update, assessment

¶3. (SBU) Mulet reiterated from the Secretary-General's letter that Malaysia deployed one additional infantry company of 150 personnel at the end of July and Indonesia and Nepal are scheduled to each deploy one infantry company of 150 personnel over the next two months. He also said a multi-role logistics company would be deployed to replace the Polish troops which are scheduled to withdraw by October ¶2009. In terms of the Maritime Task Force (MTF), he noted that only seven of the 12 required vessels are available. As a result, he announced, the Lebanese Navy has become more involved in the hailing and boarding of vessels at sea, both during the day and at night, which is an important step forward so that they can assume greater control over their territorial waters. He underscored the Lebanese Navy's need for several large vessels. He repeated the Secretary-General's announcement from his August 6 letter that DPKO and UNIFIL would undertake an assessment of UNIFIL's capacity to ensure that resources match requirements.

Actions needed from parties
and international community

¶4. (SBU) Mulet stressed the work that remains to be done. He called for ground violations of the Blue Line to cease,

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for Israel to withdraw from northern Ghajar and to cease its air violations, for Lebanon to intensify its efforts south of the Litani River to discover and remove weapons, make sure there are no armed elements in that area, prevent the possible smuggling of weapons across the Litani river, and ensure UNIFIL's full freedom of movement. He called on the international community to support the development of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) so that it can fulfill its responsibilities down to the Blue Line and in its territorial waters and to step up efforts to find a political solution. He stressed that UNIFIL cannot be a substitute for the peace process.

Council members unanimously
call for UNIFIL renewal

¶5. (SBU) Council members in consultations unanimously voiced support for the extension of UNIFIL's mandate for another 12 months. The French Perm Rep said France would soon submit a draft mandate renewal resolution for the Council's consideration which would reaffirm the Council's support for UNIFIL, renew the mandate without changes, press the parties to implement UNSCR 1701, and address the latest violations. (Note: Adoption of the mandate extension resolution is scheduled for August 27. End note.) The Russian DPR specifically commented that UNIFIL's current mandate is appropriate, and the Libyan DPR said that the current mandate is the "maximum ceiling." The Turkish DPR underlined that UNIFIL is a priority for Turkey and it will continue its land and maritime component contributions, noting that the Turkish corvette will be replaced by a frigate in October.

Majority of Council again voice
concern about Khirbet Selim

¶6. (SBU) The French and UK Perm Reps reiterated concern about the events in Khirbet Selim, including the presence of arms south of the Litani River and the impingement on UNIFIL's freedom of movement. (Note: Ambassador Rice delivered points drawn from ref A. End note.) The French

Perm Rep called on UNIFIL and the LAF to work together "so the events of July are not repeated," for the parties to show restraint, and for the Secretary-General and the parties to work on a long-term political solution. The Japanese Charge said that Japan was gravely concerned by the July 14 arms cache explosion, particularly the fact that the depot was actively maintained. The Austrian DPR and Costa Rican DPR called for determined action by the LAF to ensure that there are no arms, armed elements, or weapons smuggled into the area south of the Litani River. The Austrian DPR also called for immediate respect of the arms embargo and control of the Lebanese-Syrian border and for the full freedom of movement of UNIFIL personnel, stressing that this was the LAF's responsibility.

17. (SBU) The Costa Rican DPR said that the LAF needs to address the issue of Hizballah without exception, stressing that it is a grave issue for the region as a whole. The Croatian Charge said that by maintaining a substantial military capacity, Hizballah is undermining the Lebanese state and called for the disarmament of all armed groups outside of the control of the State. The Turkish DPR said Turkey welcomed the investigation into the latest incidents and looked forward to learning its conclusions. The Mexican Perm Rep said that if the findings of the preliminary investigation are confirmed, then it would be a clear violation of UNSCR 1701 and it should be condemned with the same vigor as are Israeli violations. The Russian DPR stressed that Russia "does not support attempts to classify violations." He stressed that there should not be any violations by any side and that Russia was passing that signal to all of the parties. The Croatian Charge said that violations should be condemned no matter who commits them.

Libya tries to excuse
Khirbet Selim incident

18. (SBU) The Libyan DPR's comments were strikingly different on the Khirbet Selim incident. He said that since the investigation is still ongoing, no one should jump to any conclusions since anything is possible, given the region. He did, however, say, without offering any evidence, that the arms were not smuggled into the area post-2006. He attributed the presence of the arms in the area of operations to the distrust on the Lebanese side because of daily Israeli air violations and the Israeli "network of spies." He characterized Hizballah's presence in the area during the

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incident as "natural" given that Hizballah is a recognized resistance movement that cooperates closely with the LAF.

Calls for Israel to cease
overflights and withdraw from Ghajar

19. (SBU) Almost all Council members touched on Israel's continued overflights and need to withdraw from northern Ghajar. The Libyan DPR called for the Council to deal with Israeli violations "as a priority." The Chinese DPR called specifically for respect of Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty, called on Israel to cease its overflights and withdraw from Ghajar, and called for the parties to do more to address Sheb'a.

Council welcomes UNIFIL assessment

110. (SBU) The Japanese Charge welcomed the Secretariat's assessment of UNIFIL and said it was "most appropriate to make the best use of limited assets." He also appealed to member states to pay promptly their peacekeeping budget assessments. The Chinese DPR called for the Secretary-General to brief the Council on the results of the assessment. The Vietnamese DPR called for the assessment to

be carefully planned with the TCCs to ensure efficiency. The UK Council President voiced support for the "review of UNIFIL's effectiveness" and asked that it include the Maritime Task Force "where there are different views of its added value."

RICE